



NJDOE News

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New Jersey Department of Education Releases 2005 School Report Cards

The New Jersey Department of Education today released the 2005 School Report Cards, which contain detailed statistical profiles of all public schools in the state. The annual reports enable members of the public to gauge their local schools' educational progress.

"The Legislature established the School Report Card process so that parents and interested citizens can review statistics about their local schools and evaluate whether the schools are providing their students with a high-quality education in a cost-effective way," said acting Commissioner of Education Lucille E. Davy.

The reports also show how well each school is doing in meeting the requirements of the Core Curriculum Content Standards and the state's goal of having all children able to read by the end of third grade.

Report cards are produced for all elementary and secondary schools, as well as vocational schools, special education schools, charter schools, and Special Services School Districts.

The information is arranged under five categories - school environment, student information, student performance indicators, staff information, and district/charter financial information. Each year, the department makes adjustments to the data fields to accommodate new federal mandates or to clarify the information that is presented in the report. The 2005 version includes two years of NJASK 3 test results and the first year of NJASK 4 science results.

"While the report card is primarily a tool for each community to use in its own evaluation of its own schools' performance, the state-level comparisons included in the various report card fields do allow us to identify some statewide trends," acting Commissioner Davy said.

The 2005 data indicate that:

- There are almost 25,000 more students in New Jersey's public schools than there were in the 2002-2003 school year, and almost 78,000 more students than there were five years ago. The number of classroom teachers grew from about 98,000 to 109,800 in that same five year period.
- There have been significant increases in the number of Hispanic students, from 201,350 in 2000-01, to 227,145 in 2002-03, to 246,174 last year, for a total increase of almost 45,000 students in the past five years. "This means that there is an even greater demand for quality bi-lingual and ESL programs in our state, in our suburban schools as well," said acting Commissioner Davy.
- Internet connections for all rooms in the school have steadily risen to an average of 97.9% in 2004-05 and the number of students per computer available for supervised instruction has decreased to 3.9.
- Statewide mobility and dropout rates have been holding steady on a state level, but parents, community members and educators are encouraged to look at the number for each school because there are wide variations among districts in these statistics that show up at the school and district levels.
- The graduation rate has risen to 91.3 percent for 2004-05, but it is also clear that we are holding steady on the number of students who graduated via the Special Review Assessment at between 14 and 15 percent. New Jersey's SAT participation and performance have remained steady and Advanced Placement participation is holding around 15 percent.
- The median salary for teachers in 2004-05 is \$52,583 up from \$51,809 in 03-04 while administrators' median salary is \$102,755 up from \$99,483 in 03-04. However, administrative and teacher salaries and benefits calculated as a percentage of a district's total comparative expenditures have held steady for the past three years at 56% for teacher salaries and benefits and 9% for administrator salaries and benefits.

The reports released today are the eleventh to be produced under the 1995 state law that standardizes much of the information and requires its annual distribution. They also represent the 15th time New Jersey has issued a

report on its public schools, since the first report cards were distributed in 1989.

The school report card is on the department's Web site at <http://education.state.nj.us/rc/>